

Banks in Bombay, Mysore and Baroda and earnestly hoped that a State Bank would soon be established with a view to expand trade, develop commerce and promote industries and that it would be worked on such lines as would be of real help to the local merchant and trader. In conclusion, he assured the Government of the extreme readiness of the mercantile community to pay any new taxes, rates and cesses that Government might think fit to impose in view to redress their longstanding grievances.

Dewan's reply.—I do not think you can expect a lengthy reply from me now. I thank you for the valuable suggestions you have made and the very thoughtful way in which you have handled your subject. If there is any department of administration in which Government have to take the public into their confidence and to consult them, it is pre-eminently the Department of Commerce and Industry. As I have already told you, I shall during my visit to Alleppey consult non-official opinion not only on the lines on which commercial education should be started, but in regard to the general question of trade and commerce also. I am sure I shall receive from you the ample measure of co-operation that I expect of you.

26. Increased help from Government in the interests of the mercantile community of Travancore.

Mr. Ousep Chacko (Member, Trading Classes, Changamachery) said that the Government aid was not sufficient in the field of commerce and as such the commerce of the country was not progressing. He suggested that for the improvement of commerce, trade experts might be appointed by Government in the important commercial centres in India with a view to enable the people to know the needs of foreign markets, and urged the necessity of opening a State Bank with branches at all important commercial centres for the use and convenience of the traders and also the opening of a Chamber of Commerce which would tend to the development of commerce. He also requested the Government to take steps to bring all the hundi merchants and their hundi business under Government control and supervision by providing for registration and periodical inspection and examination of their accounts, so that people who had deposited money with them might not be left completely helpless in case the hundi merchants turned insolvent.

Dewan's reply.—As regards the State Bank, reply has already been given. The creation of a Chamber of Commerce is a matter for the merchants themselves. As regards hundi merchants, the matter will be looked into.

(5) MARINE.

27. Extension of the proposed Cochin harbour to Arukutti.

Mr. Adichan Narayanan (Member, Shertallay Taluk) began by saying that, just as Bombay which was but an unimportant marshy settlement at the beginning of the 18th century had now become the wealthiest city in the whole of Asia, so would Cochin, after the completion of the proposed harbour, outbeat Bombay within the next 20 years. Only in States with good ports would there be commercial and industrial development which alone would tend to material prosperity and real progress. Travancoreans were being denied the advantages attendant on the transactions of export and import of goods in a harbour. A good harbour was a source of great income to the State. That was one of the main reasons which weighed with the British Government and the Cochin Darbar to undertake the development of the Cochin harbour. Travancoreans were not envious at the prospect of Cochin improving but only it should not be at the risk of Travancore. The statesmen of Travancore had from olden times realised the importance of providing it with good ports. Before opening a port at Alleppey, Quilon answered for all practical purposes the requirements of a port for Travancore. But, as it was found that the natural advantages of the Cochin port attracted the major portion of the commerce of Travancore, that far-seeing statesman, Raja Kesava Das, resolved 150 years ago to open a new port at Alleppey, even to the prejudice of the Quilon port, and invited foreign merchants to settle there, granting them several concessions. During the long interval that had elapsed, no improvement had been effected to this port to enable vessels to call there throughout the year. It was the duty of Government to